



## State Legislative Update for the Week of March 9 - 13, 2015

*Monday, March 9, 2015*

### **Senate Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

#### **Senator Saxhaug introduced:**

**SF 1455:** A bill for an act relating to veterans; repealing commissioner of veterans affairs guardianship program; repealing Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 196.051.  
Referred to the Committee on State and Local Government.

### **House Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

#### **Lueck, Persell, Dettmer and Newton introduced:**

**HF 1556:** A bill for an act relating to veterans; changing "Hire a Veteran Month" from May to July; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 10.565.  
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

### **Committee Hearings**

Committee: **House Veterans Affairs Division**

Chair: Rep. Bob Dettmer

Agenda:

**HF 705** (Howe): Congressionally chartered veterans organization property provided reduced classification rate. This bill provides a property tax reduction of approximately 33 percent for property of non-profit community service organizations that are owned or operated by congressionally chartered veterans' organizations. Qualifying organizations are the American Legion and the VFW. This reduction results in a slight increase in tax burdens to all other properties. The bill was moved, as amended, and re-referred to the Tax Committee.

**HF 745** (Howe): Veterans preference procedures and rights modified. This bill amends the veterans preference law. It will:

- authorize a veteran who requests a hearing upon notice of termination to select the body that will hear the veteran's challenge to the termination and if

the veteran does not select a hearing body, the decision belongs to the governmental subdivision;

- mandate that governmental subdivisions must pay the costs associated with the hearings, including the veteran's attorneys' fees, if the veteran prevails; and,
- extend veteran preference termination protections to teachers.

Both the League of Cities and the Association of MN Counties object to the veteran's choice between a civil board or a veterans preference hearing as well as the payment of reasonable attorney fees if the veteran prevails. The MN Association of School Boards opposes the extension of veterans preference to teachers. The bill was moved, as amended, to the Government Operations and Elections Policy Committee with the understanding the author would work with all parties to resolve differences.

**HF 1296** (Anderson): Stearns County provided grant for administrative funding to support a service provider serving veterans, and money appropriated. This bill appropriates \$85,000 in each year of the biennium to the Commissioner of Human Services for an administrative funding grant to Stearns County for a service provider serving veterans in Stearns County (Eagles Healing Nest). The grant may be used to support a variety of services for veterans in Stearns County. The bill was moved and re-referred to Health and Humans Services Finance Committee.

**HF 1414** (Hancock): Montevideo and Bemidji; veteran homes funding provided, nonstate contributions allowed, bonds issued, and money appropriated. This bill provides bond appropriations for the design and construction of two new state veterans' homes, one in Bemidji and one in Montevideo that will be run by the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA). The appropriations (\$6,000,000 for Montevideo and \$10,000,000 for Bemidji) are part of the 35 percent match which is necessary to be eligible to apply for the 65 percent match from the federal Veterans Administration to complete the proposed state veterans' homes. This bill authorizes the commissioner of Veterans Affairs to apply for federal funding for up to 140 beds for the two facilities and provides that the state shall pay the operating cost of the homes. The bill was moved, as amended, and re-referred to State Government Finance.

Committee: **Senate State and Local Government**

Chair: Sen. Patricia Torres Ray

Agenda:

**SF 888** (Saxhaug): State Government, veterans and military affairs appropriations bill. Mike McElhiney, Legislative Director for the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, briefly reviewed the change item requested by the department. The use of Support Our Troops money may be granted to an approved organization to support and improve the lives of veterans and their families or to a nonprofit corporation that specifies that a purpose of the organization is providing financial assistance to veterans and their families. The Commissioner of Veterans Affairs may approve grants up to \$100,000.

***Tuesday, March 10, 2015***

## **House Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

### **Newton introduced:**

**HF 1673:** A bill for an act relating to veterans; repealing commissioner of veterans affairs guardianship program; repealing Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 196.051. The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

*Wednesday, March 11, 2015*

## **Senate Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest: None

## **House Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

### **Persell, Newton, Dettmer, Ward, Sundin and Slocum introduced:**

**HF 1734:** A bill for an act relating to natural resources; modifying conditions for state park passes issued without a fee to active military personnel and disabled veterans; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 85.053, subdivisions 8, 10. The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

### **Lillie introduced:**

**HF 1758:** A bill for an act relating to creative freedom; adopting the Creative Freedom Act; regulating employee invention agreements for veterans; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 181.78, by adding a subdivision. The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

## **Committee Hearings**

Committee: **House Health and Human Services Reform**

Chair: Rep. Tara Mack

Agenda:

**HF 877** (Anderson): Stearns County; group residential housing modified by requiring supplemental service rate. This bill provides a supplementary service rate for a GRH provider located in Stearns County. GRH is a state program that provides payments on behalf of eligible persons to pay for room and board and related housing services. In order to be eligible for GRH payments, an individual must have county approval for residence in a GRH setting and must: (1) be aged, blind, or over 18 years of age and disabled, and meet specified income and asset standards; or (2) belong to a category of individuals potentially eligible for GA and meet specified income and asset standards.

Counties are allowed to negotiate a room and board rate that exceeds the GRH basic room and board rate by a certain amount per month for other services necessary to provide room and board, if the provider is not also receiving MA funding for waived services or personal care services, or funding under Minnesota Rules, parts 9535.2000 to

9535.3000 (Rule 12) for residential services for the adult mentally ill. This rate is available mainly to board and lodging with special services and noncertified boarding care home settings, and applies to all recipients in the setting. The bill was moved and referred to the Health and Humans Services Finance Committee.

***Thursday, March 12, 2015***

### **Senate Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

#### **Senator Hayden introduced:**

**SF 1667:** A bill for an act relating to capital investment; appropriating money for the Pioneer and Soldiers Cemetery restoration; authorizing the sale and issuance of state bonds.

Referred to the Committee on Capital Investment.

#### **Senators Hawj, Hayden, Hoffman, Lourey and Rosen introduced:**

**SF 1691:** A bill for an act relating to human services; appropriating money for culturally specific mental health services for Southeast Asian veterans.

Referred to the Committee on Finance.

### **House Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

#### **Dauids introduced:**

**HF 1774:** A bill for an act relating to capital investment; appropriating money for a veterans home in Fillmore County; allowing for nonstate contributions; authorizing the sale and issuance of state bonds.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on State Government Finance.

#### **Clark, Hausman, Allen, Urdahl, Davnie and Hoppe introduced:**

**HF 1847:** A bill for an act relating to capital investment; appropriating money for the Pioneer and Soldiers Cemetery restoration; authorizing the sale and issuance of state bonds.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on State Government Finance.

### **Committee Hearings**

Committee: **House State Government Finance**

Chair: Rep. Sarah Anderson

Agenda:

**HF 501 (Fenton):** Military and overseas voting provisions modified. This bill expands the existing special procedures for absentee voting by members of the military and other citizens residing overseas to include members of the Minnesota National Guard. The bill also allows adult children of citizens residing permanently overseas to vote in Minnesota

elections, if a parent resided in Minnesota prior to leaving the country. The bill was moved and referred to the General Register.

**HF 450** (Lohmer): Military Spouses and Families Day established. This bill, as amended, would designate the Sunday immediately preceding Memorial Day as Military Spouses and Families Day in honor of the support and sacrifice that the spouses and families of military personnel make for the betterment of this country. The bill was moved and referred to the General Register.

### **Upcoming Committee Hearings of Veterans Interest Week of March 16 - 20, 2015**

#### **Monday, March 16, 2015**

Committee: **House Veterans Affairs Division**

Chair: Rep. Bob Dettmer

Room: 200 State Office Building

Time: 12:45 PM

Agenda:

**HF 506** (Schoen): LPC, LPCC, or LADC temporary licensing provided for former and current military members.

**HF 1556** (Lueck): Hire a Veteran Month changed from May to July.

**HF 127** (Dettmer): USS Minnesota commissioning activities grant funding provided, and money appropriated.

**HF 1673** (Newton): Commissioner of veterans affairs guardianship program repealed.

#### **Tuesday, March 17, 2015**

Committee: **Senate Higher Education and Workforce Development**

Chair: Sen. Terri Bonoff

Room: 107 Capitol

Time: 2:00 PM

Agenda:

**SF 951** (Kiffmeyer): National guard members resident status for higher education grants and scholarship purposes.

Committee: **House Mining and Outdoor Recreation Policy**

Chair: Rep. Tom Hackbarth

Room: 10 State Office Building

Time: 2:45 PM

Agenda:

**HF 243** (Newton): Driver's licenses and Minnesota identification cards Purple Heart designation established, and state park permits provided.